

Parth Bhagwat
2276 Goldcrest Circle,
Pleasanton, CA - 94566

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California Department of Education
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

Sub: Inclusion of Nature worship as a part of hinduism in 6th grade textbooks.

Dear Members of Instructional Quality Commission, History Social Science Subject matter committee.

My name is Parth Bhagwat, I am in 8th grade and I go to Harvest Park Middle School. Through this letter, I would like to request for the inclusion of nature worship, as part of Hinduism in the sixth grade textbooks. We Hindus view divinity in every grain of sand, in every tree around us, in every animal and in every thing, living or nonliving. We see them as interconnected and as the manifestation of one God. This is a very essential part of Hinduism. Hinduism is probably the only major religion that has diverse practices of worshipping nature including trees, plants, animals and natural elements.

Our reverence for nature is represented in our gods, for example Ganesha - the Elephant God or Naga - the snake God and countless others. We see God through all of them. We revere and see God in Prakriti Mata - mother nature and Bhumi mata - mother earth. Every year, we have a custom of performing Tulsi puja at home where we worship the Tulsi plant - the holy basil which we consider the symbol of the whole universe. We Hindus consider all of them as sacred and interconnected and hence try to preserve them. Vedas, our sacred scriptures have sacred poetry that revere the forests, mountains and rivers and see the oneness in all beings.

Nature worship has been a very important part of Hinduism I would rather say it is central to it. I urge you to include this aspect of Hinduism in the textbooks so that Hinduism is portrayed correctly and in its completeness. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Parth Bhagwat